



Gauley River NRA News

Dear Park Neighbors, Visitors, and Other Interested Parties:

Work on the new Development Concept Plan (DCP) for the Gauley River National Recreation Area has progressed well since last June when NPS began the project, in part as a result of the helpful input we received from stakeholders and from the two public meetings we held last summer and fall.

Our initial meetings with you focused upon defining a DCP and how it is prepared. We also discussed with you your concerns and your ideas regarding the various opportunities and constraints affecting the future of the Park. Now we would like to share with you some preliminary concepts for the future development of the park.

In this newsletter you will find summaries of three concepts being considered for the Gauley River NRA. Maps illustrate each concept, along with accompanying brief descriptions of the various facilities shown on each of the concept diagrams.

At our next public meeting we will provide additional explanation of the three preliminary concepts under consideration. We encourage you to provide comments. Public Meeting 3 will be held on February 12, 2004 from 7:00 to 9:00 PM at the Midland Trail High School, located on Route 60, 1/2 mile east of Route 16 in Hico, West Virginia.

We hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

Calvin F. Hite, Superintendent
Gauley River National Recreation Area
Bluestone National Scenic River
New River Gorge National River

Gauley River National Recreation Area Development Concept Plan

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTS

(see pages 2 and 3 of this newsletter for illustrations of the three alternative concepts)

CONCEPT A – *No Action*

Concept A assumes a continuation of the existing management of the park. Required by the National Environmental Policy Act, concept A provides the baseline against which the action alternatives are measured. For the purposes of comparison, this concept assumes that visitor use continues as it exists today, with public facilities limited to those currently owned by NPS at Tailwaters.

CONCEPT B – *Dispersed River Access*

During the public and stakeholder meetings, many people expressed a desire for expanded recreational opportunities and experiences within the Gauley River National Recreation Area. In Concept B, Gauley River left and the Meadow River are the focus of expanded nature-based recreation experiences, including hiking, biking, wildlife watching, rock climbing, and fishing. Expanded facilities, including parking, trails and trail heads, and other development is provided to facilitate these activities. Whitewater paddlers – both outfitted and private – access the Gauley on river right at Tailwaters, Mason Branch, Woods Ferry, Bucklick, Peters Creek and Lower Swiss. These six Gauley River right accesses provide flexible access for all users, and enable paddlers to choose from a variety of choices for river trips on the Upper, Middle and Lower Gauley during all water flow periods. At the six accesses, public facilities are available for all types of park visitors and are sized to meet outfitted and private paddler demand during the fall Gauley Season. A variety of camping opportunities are offered to park visitors, dispersed among most of the Gauley River right accesses, at a new middle Gauley campground, and at two locations on Gauley River left.

CONCEPT C – *Concentrated River Access*

Concept C was developed as a response to those who, in the public meetings, expressed a desire to see only limited development in the Gauley River National Recreation Area. In this alternative, Gauley River left and the Meadow River are opened for limited nature-based recreation experiences, such as hiking, biking, wildlife watching, rock climbing, and fishing. Whitewater paddlers – both outfitted and private – access the Gauley on river right. Unlike Concept B, however, river right access occurs only at Tailwaters, Woods Ferry, and Lower Swiss. Woods Ferry is the focus of Middle Gauley River access, with facilities concentrated at both the river's edge and on the plateau above the river. All other river accesses on the Middle Gauley River right are closed to vehicular access, although trails and trailhead parking are provided to each from the plateau near Panther Mt. Road. At the three river accesses, public facilities are available for all types of park visitors and are sized to meet outfitted and private paddler demand during the fall Gauley Season. A variety of camping opportunities are offered to all types of park visitors, although they are concentrated at the Tailwaters plateau, the Woods Ferry area and Sugar Creek. Previously disturbed lands acquired from willing sellers that are no longer needed for development are restored through removal of structures, regrading, and revegetation. Because many existing private river accesses are closed to vehicular use in this alternative, it offers more extensive opportunities for restoration of the park's river setting when compared to Concept B.

Gauley River National Recreation Area

PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES

FACILITIES

- VC** Visitor Center: Welcome center with exhibit space, offices, and public restrooms. App. 6,000 gross sq. ft.
- RA** Ranger Station: Base for NPS ranger activity, including offices and support facilities.
- CS** Comfort Station: Public restrooms with toilets, potable water, and electricity. Connected to sewer.
- VT** Vault Toilet: Self-contained public restroom facility. No water service. May have electrical service.
- M** Operations Building: Operations building with staff offices, restrooms, break room, and work bays.
- P** Parking: Developed parking area with designated parking for all types of visitors.
- PA** Picnic: Facilities for picnicking, such as tables, grills, and trash receptacles.
- OL** Overlook: Pull-off at scenic overlook with parking facilities for a few vehicles.
- DA** Disabled Accessible: Parking for disabled. Some provision for access to facilities.
- F** Fishing: Fishing access and parking for fishermen provided.
- T** Trails: Trailhead and trailhead parking provided.
- C** Climbing: Areas of rock climbing interest. Trail access provided.
- I** Interpretive Feature: Interpretive wayside exhibit provided.

RIVER ACCESS

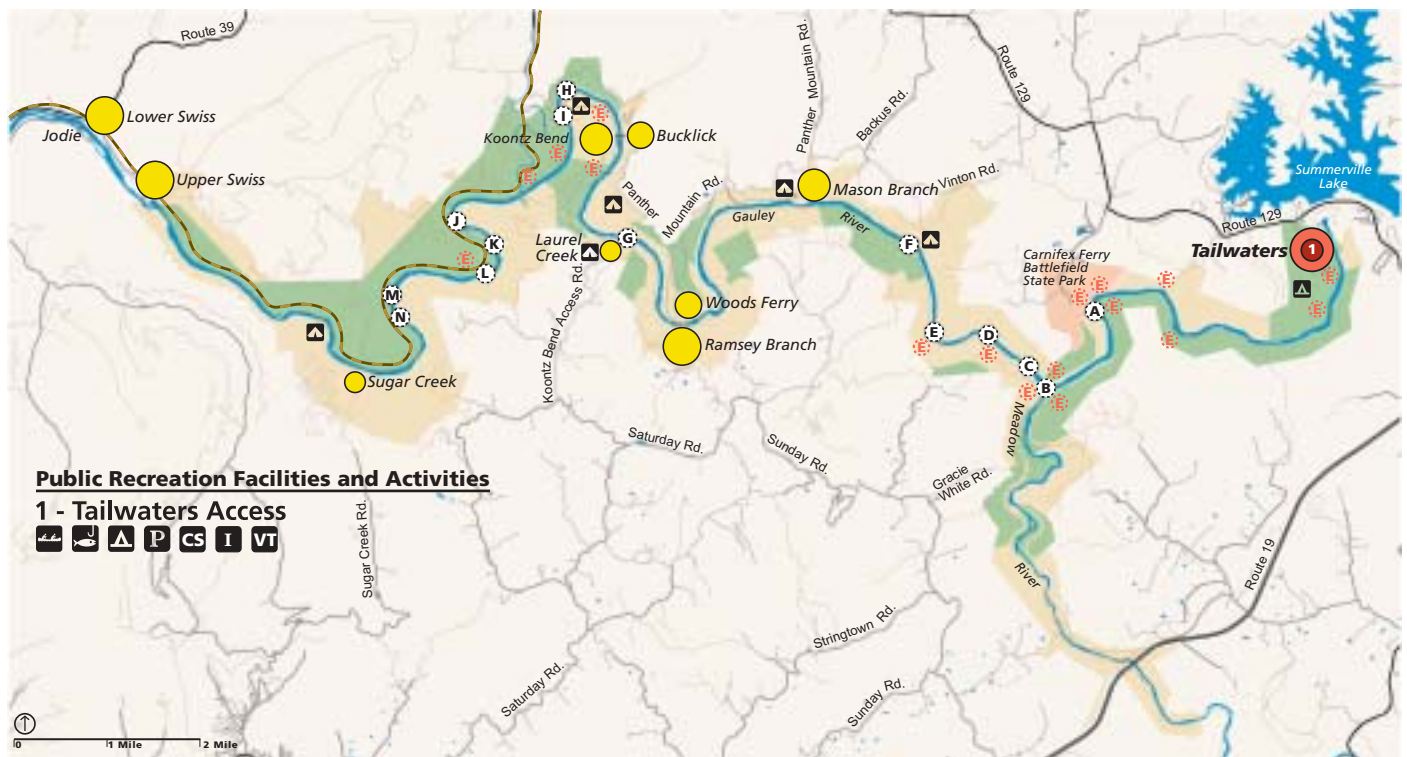
- RA** Public River Access: Facilities provided for all visitors to the river's edge (see below for definitions of the types of public river access shown as different colored circles on Alternative Concepts A, B and C.)
- MA** Major Public River Access: Public access point with put-in/take-out ramps for outfitted and private paddlers, parking slots for outfitter equipment trucks and buses, parking for private paddlers, trail and fishing access, and disabled accessible parking.
- MR** Minor Public River Access: Designated public access points for private paddlers, trailhead and fishing access, and disabled accessible parking. A small number of parking spaces provided.
- PR** Private River Access: Privately owned river access points.
- EA** Emergency Vehicle Access: Areas restricted to NPS and local emergency vehicle use only.

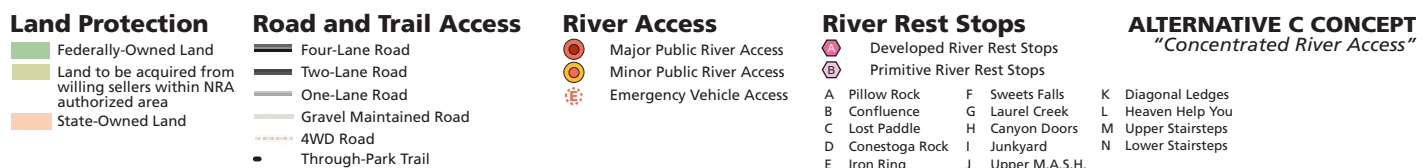
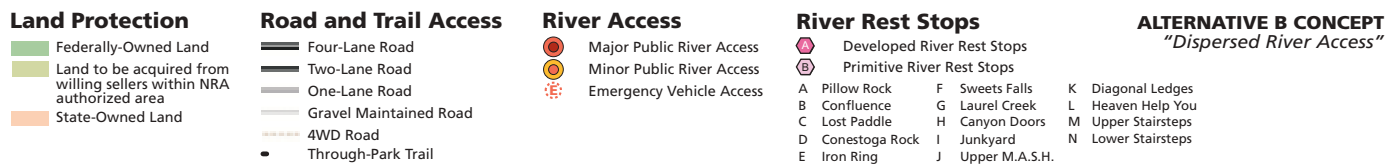
RIVER REST STOPS

- DR** Developed River Rest Stop: High use designated river stop. Facilities include road access and minimal parking, safe river access locations, boat tie-up space, vault toilet or wastewater facility, trash receptacles, interpretive and operations signage, trail connections, boardwalks/decks/picnic tables (if conditions permit).
- PR** Primitive River Rest Stop: Moderate use designated river stop. Facilities include wastewater facility, 'pack-it-in, pack-it-out' trash policy, interpretive and operations signage, trail connections.

CAMPING

- PF** Public Family Camping: Accommodates campers with tents, trailers, and/or RVs up to 35' long. Each site includes a picnic table, campfire ring, and trash receptacle. Central comfort station and potable water. No power. Sites limited to 2 vehicles, 2 tents and 8 people. Handicapped accessible sites are available.
- PG** Public Group Camping: Designated campsites on the Tailwaters plateau that accommodate groups. Facilities include those typical of public family camping sites (see above).
- PR** Public Group River Camping: Designated areas along the river to accommodate groups on overnight whitewater trips. Accommodates 40 to 80 campers. Each area has ten 10' x 12' tent platforms, campfire ring(s), a pavilion with picnic tables, vault toilet and two parking spaces for supply vehicles. No power or potable water.
- PG** Private Group Camping: Privately owned group camping sites used by outfitters.
- MD** Minimum Development Camping: Camping for tents and small self-contained RVs (20 ft. limit). Each camp area consists of 10 sites. Each site includes a picnic table, campfire ring, and trash receptacle. Central vault toilet and potable water. No power. Sites limited to 2 tents, 6 people, and 1 vehicle (not including trailers).







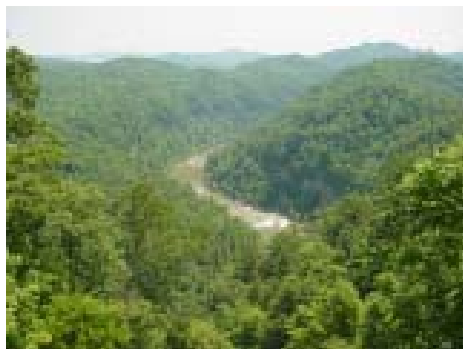
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Gauley River National Recreation Area
P.O. Box 246
Glen Jean, WV 25846

Gauley River National Recreation Area Development Concept Plan PUBLIC MEETING 3

Date: Thursday, February 12, 2004
Time: 7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.
Place: Midland Trail High School
Location: Route 60, 1/2 mile east of
Route 19, Hico, WV

View of Canyon Doors rapids on the
Gauley River from Panther Mountain
Road



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

Who is on the Planning Team?

The DCP Planning Team consists of the Park Superintendent, Park Staff, and technical specialists from the National Park Service's Northeast Regional Office. Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC is a private contractor that is assisting the National Park Service with the planning process. The Park Superintendent and the Director of the Northeast Regional Office of the National Park Service will be the decision-makers in the planning effort. The DCP Planning Team will coordinate with appropriate State of West Virginia, federal and local agencies.

Comments? Write or Email to:

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Gauley River National Recreation Area
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PUBLIC MEETING 3

The National Park Service will host the third Public Meeting for the Gauley River National Recreation Area Development Concept Plan:

**February 12, 2004
7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M**

At Midland Trail High School

(Route 60, 1/2 mile east of Route 19, Hico, WV)

Agenda:

- Opening Greeting
- Presentation – Alternative Concepts under Consideration for the Gauley River National Recreation Area
- Information Stations:
 - Alternative Concept A: No Action
 - Alternative Concept B: Dispersed River Access
 - Alternative Concept C: Concentrated River Access

Development Concept Plan Process and Schedule

1	Data Collection Public Scoping Identification of Issues Newsletter 1 Public Meeting 1	Summer 2003
2	Development of Alternatives Newsletter 2 Public Meeting 2	Fall 2003
3	Presentation of Alternatives Newsletter 3 Public Meeting 3	Winter 2004
4	Identification of Preferred Alternative Draft DCP/EA Public Meeting 4	Spring 2004
5	Responses to Public Comments Final DCP/EA	Summer 2004